

## **4 FAH-2 H-100 UNITED STATES DISBURSING OFFICER (USDO) AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4 FAH-2 H-110 AUTHORITIES AND DESIGNATIONS**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)  
(Office of Origin: RM/FPRA/FPMC)*

### **4 FAH-2 H-111 INTRODUCTION AND APPLICABILITY**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

- a. This handbook prescribes the authorities, designations, and responsibilities of the U.S. disbursing officer (USDO) assigned to the Department of State, Bureau of Resource Management, Global Financial Services (RM/GFS). The USDO disburses and collects U.S. government funds by direct delegation of the Department of the Treasury under authority of 31 U.S.C. Chapter 33. The Department of State manages the Global Financial Services centers in Charleston, SC and Bangkok, Thailand.
- b. The Bureau of Resource Management (RM) is responsible for establishing the Department's policy regarding the operations of the Global Financial Services centers. The USDO in Bangkok reports to the director of RM/GFS Bangkok, who in turn reports directly to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Global Financial Services. The USDO in Charleston reports to the Director, Global Disbursing Operations (RM/GFS/S/DO) who in turn reports to the Principal Managing Director of Customer Support, Training and Global Disbursing Operations (RM/GFS/S). The Director, RM/GFS/S, reports to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Global Financial Services, who in turn reports to the Chief Financial Officer.

## **4 FAH-2 H-112 AUTHORITIES**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

USDO authorities and responsibilities are derived from the following:

- (1) The United States Code, 31 U.S.C., Chapters 33 and 35; and
- (2) Treasury Financial Manual, Volume 1, Part 4 - Disbursing.

## **4 FAH-2 H-113 DESIGNATION OF USDO**

### **4 FAH-2 H-113.1 U.S. Citizen Direct Hire Employees**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

- a. The Chief Disbursing Officer of the Treasury Department delegates disbursing authority to the Department of State in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3321. Department of State U.S. citizen employees are assigned to RM/GFS Charleston or RM/GFS Bangkok and designated as a USDO by the Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS. A new designation is required when an incumbent USDO transfers to a different assignment, is permanently incapacitated or dies, or is removed from the USDO position for any reason. An updated designation must be completed when a USDO changes his or her name. A legal name change means by marriage, divorce, or other legal action. A change in method of signing is not in itself a legal change (for example, John S. Smith to J.S. Smith). The RM/GFS office must request the new or updated designation from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS. The new legal name cannot be used for disbursing purposes until the designation has been made.
- b. RM/GFS USDO Designation Process.
  - (1) Upon assignment, the Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS will advise the Director, RM/GFS/S/DO and the Director, RM/GFS Bangkok of the USDO's name, length of assignment, and place where the USDO will exercise the authority.
  - (2) Prior to arrival of the incoming USDO, the Director, Global Disbursing Operations, will notify the Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS, via memo of the name and effective date of the requested USDO designation.
  - (3) The Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS, will designate the USDO

in writing by cable or letter. The written designation cable or letter is sent to the Director, Global Disbursing Operations, and to the Director, RM/GFS Bangkok, who in turn will send copies of the written designations to all the local banks in which the USDO conducts business and where U.S. government funds are maintained. (See 4 FAH-2 Exhibits H-113 (1) and H-113 (2)).

- (4) The Director, Global Disbursing Operations, will notify the Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS, of the date the individual ceased performing the USDO function.
- (5) The USDO, through the Director, Global Disbursing Operations, can request the Deputy Assistant Secretary, RM/GFS, to designate assistant USDOs. The assistant USDOs can act on behalf of the USDO during the USDO's temporary absence or incapacity. Where circumstances warrant, assistant USDOs can actively assist the USDO in managing daily disbursing operations. An assistant USDO performs the same duties and functions as the USDO. (See 4 FAH-2 H-113.2 for nominating a Foreign Service national (FSN) employee as assistant USDO).

## **4 FAH-2 H-113.2 FSN Direct Hire Employees**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

- a. An FSN employee may be designated assistant USDO. The following information must be provided to RM/GFS when requesting designation of an FSN as assistant USDO.
  - (1) The name of the employee being nominated.
  - (2) The qualifications of the FSN employee and why he or she is being nominated.
  - (3) The recourses available to the United States in the event the FSN misappropriates funds and the extent that host country laws and/or the courts aid in the prosecution of their citizens and the recovery of misappropriated funds.
- b. The designation of an FSN is limited to a two-year period. The designation renewal or termination request should be submitted to RM/GFS approximately 60 days prior to the end of the period. The request should include justifications for the renewal and identify any changes in operations or local laws.

## **4 FAH-2 H-114 RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF USDO**

### **4 FAH-2 H-114.1 Public Money Responsibility**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

a. Accountability and use of funds.

- (1) The USDO and assistant USDO are the only persons authorized to make direct disbursements from U.S. government funds. The USDO and assistant USDO are accountable officers and assume full personal liability for losses or shortages occurring during the performance of their duties. Their liability remains until relief is granted pursuant to statutory authority.
- (2) The availability of funds for the USDO to make payments chargeable to U.S. dollar appropriations of the Department of State and other agencies is termed “foreign service accountability” (FSA). Funds available in this category may be used to pay certified vouchers charged against U.S. dollar appropriations of the Department of State or other agencies which the USDO is authorized to service.
- (3) The FSA account represents a clearing account for collection and disbursement operations. Each disbursement is charged on the records to a specific appropriation, and each collection is credited to a proper receipt account, thus reducing or increasing the USDO FSA balance.
- (4) The USDO’s FSA balance does not control the amount of funds available for payment. Allotment data is maintained by fiscal-serviced posts. The certification of funds availability and the certification by the financial management officer or other authorized certifying officer that the payment is proper provide the controls over funding and prevent payments in excess of available appropriations.
- (5) The USDO maintains permanent official records of all disbursing transactions in accordance with the records retention schedule.

b. Pursuant to the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3322, a USDO shall:

- (1) Deposit public money; and
- (2) Draw public money from the U.S. Treasury or a designated

depository only as necessary to make certified payments, payable to persons to whom payment is to be made.

- c. The USDO is not liable for an overpayment provided under a U.S. government bill of lading or transportation request when the overpayment is caused by the:
  - (1) Use of improper transportation rates or classifications; or
  - (2) Failure to deduct the proper amount under a land grant law, or equalization, or other agreement.

## **4 FAH-2 H-114.2 Voucher Disbursements**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

- a. Pursuant to the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3325(a), except for the correctness of computations on a certified voucher, a USDO is held personally accountable for the following.
  - (1) Disbursing money only as provided by a voucher that is certified by the head of the executive agency concerned, or an officer or employee authorized to certify vouchers.
  - (2) Examining a voucher as necessary to decide if it is in proper form. Vouchers are considered properly examined when received at RM/GFS Bangkok or RM/GFS Charleston via an electronic certification system (ECS).
- b. In view of the statutory responsibility of certifying officers (see 4 FAM 432), a USDO is not required to verify the propriety or legality of vouchers that are in proper form, properly approved, and certified for payment. However, if in the course of exercising the disbursing function, an error is discovered, the voucher is to be returned to the certifying officer for correction.

## **4 FAH-2 H-114.3 Cashier Review**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

For each authorized cashier, the designating USDO shall do the following.

- (1) Establish and maintain a file on each cashier, which includes the request for designation, each request for increase or decrease of the fund cash advance, and any other correspondence related to the fund cash advance including a record of unannounced

verifications and reconciliations.

- (2) Annually review each cashier advance for propriety and activity.
- (3) See 4 FAH-2 H-800 for policies and procedures on monitoring cashier funds.

## **4 FAH-2 H-114.4 Organization And Staffing Of USDO Office**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

The USDO is responsible for ensuring all functions of the disbursing operations are properly fulfilled, and that there is sufficient staff to carry out the activities of the disbursing office.

## **4 FAH-2 H-115 THROUGH H-119 UNASSIGNED**

## **4 FAH-2 EXHIBIT H-113 (1) DESIGNATION OF USDO**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*

FM USOFFICE FSC CHARLESTON

TO USOFFICE GFS BANGKOK

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: AFIN

SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF DISBURSING OFFICER

REF: USOFFICE FSC BANGKOK 056792

1. MARY JONES IS DESIGNATED BY RM/GFS AS USDO FOR RM/GFS BANGKOK PER 4 FAH-3 H-062 EFFECTIVE 09/2/05.
2. UNITED STATES DISBURSING OFFICERS ARE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND MAY DISBURSE IN ANY COUNTRY. THEY DERIVE THEIR AUTHORITY TO DISBURSE BY DIRECT DELEGATION FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY CHIEF DISBURSING OFFICER.
3. DISBURSING OFFICERS MUST (A) DISBURSE MONEY ONLY UPON, AND IN STRICT ACCORDANCE WITH, VOUCHERS DULY CERTIFIED BY THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT, ESTABLISHMENT, OR AGENCY CONCERNED, OR BY AN OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE THEREOF DULY AUTHORIZED IN WRITING BY SUCH HEAD TO CERTIFY SAID VOUCHERS; (B) MAKE SUCH EXAMINATION OF VOUCHERS AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THEY ARE IN PROPER FORM, DULY CERTIFIED AND APPROVED, AND CORRECTLY COMPUTED ON THE BASIS OF THE FACTS CERTIFIED; AND (C) BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE ACCORDINGLY, EXCEPT THAT ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE CORRECTNESS OF COMPUTATIONS OF CERTIFIED VOUCHERS LIES WITH THE CERTIFYING OFFICER AND NOT THE DISBURSING OFFICER (31 U.S.C. 3325.3).

4. DISBURSING OFFICERS ARE "ACCOUNTABLE OFFICERS" AND ARE AUTOMATICALLY LIABLE AT THE MOMENT OF A LOSS OR SHORTAGE. TO MITIGATE THIS RULE, HOWEVER, CONGRESS HAS PROVIDED A MECHANISM FOR RELIEF. IF THE AGENCY REQUESTS RELIEF IN CONFORMITY WITH THE STATUTORY CONDITIONS AND IF GAO AGREES WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATION, RELIEF WILL BE GRANTED.
5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR DUAL CAPACITY DESIGNATION PER 4 FAH-3 H-061.2 SHOULD BE STRICTLY OBSERVED.
6. RM/GFS RECORDS INDICATE THE FOLLOWING USDO AND ASSISTANT USDO DESIGNATIONS LISTED FOR YOUR POST:

NAME	TYPE
MARY JONES	USDO
HAROLD BROWN	ASSISTANT USDO

7. PLEASE ADVISE RM/GFS IF RECORDS AT POST DIFFER.

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## **4 FAH-2 EXHIBIT H-113(2)**

# **USDO DESIGNATION LETTER TO LOCAL BANKS**

*(CT:DOH-15; 06-21-2005)*



**United States Department of State**

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

September 5, 2005

Disbursing Officer's Name: Mary Jones  
Effective Date:  
Symbol: 8768  
Location: Bangkok, Thailand

With authorization from the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, in accordance with 31 U.S.C. section 3321, and by the letter dated February 7, 1996, the function of making disbursements is delegated by the Chief Disbursing Officer, Department of the Treasury, to the U.S. Department of State position of USDO encumbered by the above-named employee of the Department of State, effective on the date, at the location, and using the symbol listed above.

The above-named individual is a designated U.S. Disbursing Officer; and can perform the functions listed below.

In accordance with the foregoing authority and the regulations of the Treasury Financial Manual (TFM), I TFM 4-5000, Requisitioning, Preparing, and Issuing Treasury Checks, and I TFM 4-9000, Foreign Exchange, the following functions can be performed.

- Sign checks under the title U.S. Disbursing Officer, followed by his/her own signature, drawn upon the general account of the U.S. Treasury over the checking account symbol(s) shown above.
- Sign checks under the title U.S. Disbursing Officer, followed by his/her own signature, drawn upon accounts established in designated foreign depositories.
- Purchase foreign currencies with U.S. dollars as required for disbursing purposes.
- Purchase checks to be made payable in foreign currencies for

the purpose of remitting payments to Government creditors.

- Exchange foreign currency checks or other instruments payable in foreign currency, representing official funds for which the Disbursing Officer is accountable, for United States currency, United States dollar checks or other instruments payable in United States dollars for disbursing purposes.
- Cash checks and other negotiable instruments in foreign countries for accommodation exchange purposes for authorized individuals.
- Retain balances of U.S. or foreign currencies in commercial banks, not to exceed the minimum amount required to cover payments from accounts held in those bank.

James L. Millette  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Resource Management

Global Financial Services